"We are confident that the party will support us," Leipart replied. "Am I right, Otto?" Wells did not answer. He was not interested in an issue that he did not understand. All that counted with him was the jurisdictional aspect of the controversy—who should determine the policy of the party.

In the following weeks the board continued to discuss the details of my plan. I suggested inviting a government official, an expert on public works, to the board meeting. He explained the mechanism of bank credits for financing a project and tried to show that advancing money cannot produce a runaway inflation. The members were visibly interested, but Otto Wells asked sarcastically:

"What will you build? We have enough roads, enough houses. Do you intend to let us build pyramids as they did in Egypt?"

Our expert answered, "This is an excellent idea, Mr. Reichstag's Deputy. A country that cannot think of anything better must build pyramids as an eternal monument to its stupidity. I do hope, however, that with some effort Germany will find better projects."

The idea of public works was becoming increasingly popular with the unions most severely affected by the depression—the building trades and iron and steel workers. The argument that this program would cause inflation seemed to be wearing out, partly because it became widely known that the banks did not oppose the project. It looked as if we had gained the first round of the campaign. Then one morning Leipart called an emergency session of the board and announced that the S-D party had refused to support the ADGB. The Central Committee of the party considered our program an act of mutiny. Moreover, the Central Committee had decided it had to consider, above all, the employed workers, the bulk of the voters. The unemployed were voting for the Communists or the Nazis, so let those parties think of what to do for them.

I do not remember in which form this decision of the Central Committee was published and whether it was ever officially announced, but that was what Leipart told us. It was a heavy blow to our hopes. The party would now mobilize all its forces against us; mutiny must be crushed. To stop the ADGB, the party hurriedly prepared a platform of its own, with all kinds of socially desirable plans but without specific measures against the depression and without public works. The union leaders scornfully rejected the bait.

In May, Brüning resigned after a clash with Hindenburg, who had vetoed his plan for a mild agrarian reform. Von Papen, a representative of the reactionary landowning aristocracy, became Chancellor. He had good economic advisers, and his first step was to reverse Brüning's deflationary policy. But the only way he knew to pour money into circulation was to cut the taxes of the rich. This did not help the